



YAMAHA

Educator Series

PERCUSSION



Greg Gazzola

Gregory Gazzola is currently the Program Director at the Roland Hayes School of Music in Boston, MA where he directs musical studies in brass, woodwinds, strings, vocal, piano and percussion. Mr. Gazzola directs and arranges music for the Roland Hayes School of Music Percussion Ensemble that gained national recognition in 2000 & 2001 by placing fourth and second in the Winter Guard International Championships. He has taught beginning through advanced levels of percussion studies at various schools and colleges for over twenty years throughout Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and the New England States. Mr. Gazzola performed with the Air Force Band of Liberty from 1992 – 1996 and currently freelances throughout Metro Boston. His educational background includes a BM from West Virginia University, MM from Kent State University and Doctoral Studies at Boston University.

Raising Expectations for High School Percussionists Through Percussion Ensemble Literature

By Greg Gazzola

Percussion students are usually the most difficult people to control in a rehearsal. They are not necessarily bad students but typically, they tend to have the most energy, and they all usually have drumsticks. This energy level can be an asset if it can be focused into a positive activity. Many times the percussion parts of a band piece are not as demanding as some of the wind parts; this sometimes causes a loss of focus from the percussion students. Expecting more from the percussion students will improve many facets of a high school band rehearsal while improving the musical abilities of the percussionists.

Raising expectations for high school percussionists through percussion ensemble literature is one way to improve a rehearsal. This can be accomplished during the band period of a school day by assigning each percussion student additional music. Each percussion student could be assigned a part for a percussion ensemble piece; he/she would then be required to learn it during the band period. Having the student play the percussion part for a grade at a predetermined date can monitor the student's progress. Once the students have learned their parts, the ensemble can rehearse during a one-hour session after school - one day per week. One possible way to schedule a program like this would be to allow the percussion students to do individual practice time Tuesday and Thursday of each week.

Pros:

1. Idle time for percussion students will be decreased
2. The wind section would have an allotted time each week to focus on specific wind issues that do not necessarily involve the percussionists
3. The percussionist's level of playing will improve
4. Full band rehearsals can focus more on full ensemble issues
5. Percussion students will have the opportunity to perform as a percussion ensemble
6. Percussion students would work on becoming versatile percussionists
7. Percussion students would become more engaged during the band rehearsal
8. The percussion ensemble could be used as motivational tool

Cons:

1. Band director has to reorganize rehearsal schedule
2. Additional time will be needed to evaluate percussion students
3. Percussion ensemble music will have to be chosen and purchased
4. Additional time outside of the normal school day will be needed to rehearse the percussion ensemble



Gregory R. Gazzola

This strategy is something with which you may or may not want to experiment. This is a different approach to dealing with the rambunctious students in the back of your band room. If you try it, you may actually be surprised to see your percussionists using their drumsticks on something other than their sneakers!

The following is a list of methods, solos, duets and ensemble literature from the Boston Public School Percussion Program.

Clinic/Performance Literature:

- The Cowboys – John Williams, Arranged by Gregory R. Gazzola
- Katie's Bossa – Chris Crockarell, Row-Loff Productions (Medium)
- Ocho Rios – Matrix Publications (medium)
- Mo Java - Lalo Davila, Row-Loff (medium)
- Etude in C Major- Clair Omar Musser
- Selections from Disney's Tarzan – Arranged by Gregory R. Gazzola
- On The Waterfront – Leonard Bernstein, Arranged by Gregory R. Gazzola

Suggested Methods and Solos:

- The Logical Approach to Snare Drum – Phil Perkins
- Yellow After The Rain – Mitchell Peters, Mitchell Peters Publishing (medium-4 mallet)
- Three Designs for Timpani- Robert Muczinski, G. Schirmer (medium)
- Message To A Friend - mallet duet – Ney Rosauro (medium)
- Sonata Allegro- Mitchell Peters, Mitchell Peters Publishing (medium)
- Soloist Folio for Marimba or Xylophone- Rubank Inc. (medium difficult)
- Fundamental Studies for Mallets-Garwood Whaley (medium easy)
- Intermediate Duets for Snare Drum-Garwood Whaley (medium)
- The All-American Snare Drummer-Charlie Wilcoxon (medium/advanced)
- Fundamental Method for Timpani-Mitchell Peters (medium)
- Fundamental Method for Mallets-Mitchell Peters (medium easy)
- Musical Studies for the Intermediate Snare Drummer- Garwood Whaley (medium)
- Method of Movement for Marimba- Stevens, Keyboard Percussion Publications (advanced)
- Morris Dance- William Kraft, Western International Music Inc. (medium)

Suggested Ensemble Literature:

- Temple of the Yang – J. Michael Roy (easy)
- Berceuse – Jay Dawson arr. By Steinquest, Row-Loff (medium)
- Outbound – Row-Loff Productions (medium)
- Mosaics - Jared Spears, C.L. Barnhouse Corporation (medium)
- Puttin Out The Cat – Chris Brooks, Row-Loff (medium)
- Get On Your Feet – Chris Crockarell, BMI and Estefan Music Publishing (medium easy)
- Big Yellow Mambo – David Steinquest, Row-Loff (medium)
- Three Dances – Jack Mckenzi, Music for Percussion Inc. (easy)
- Ritual of The Tribe – Chris Brooks, Row-Loff (medium)
- Encore in Jazz – Vic Firth, Carl Fisher Publishing (medium)
- Layers – Alan Kneown, Matrix Publishing (medium)
- Dimensions – Elliot DelBorgo, Kender Music Inc. (medium)
- Allegro from Water Music – James L. Moore, Per Mus Publications (easy)
- Gainsborough – Tom Gauger (advanced)
- Samba- Ney Rosauro, Southern Music Company (advanced)
- Trio for Percussion- Warren Benson, Music for Percussion Inc. (medium)